

*best practices. best health.*

## YOU CAN TAKE CONTROL!

Neck pain is a very common ailment and unfortunately can affect us all. A large percentage of Canadians will suffer from neck pain over the course of their life. Neck pain can usually be managed and controlled with proper care and attention.

CBI Health Group is pleased to provide you with this Self-Help Guide to help put you in control of your own neck pain.

### HOW DOES MY NECK WORK?

The first step in relieving your neck pain is to understand the mechanics of your neck. If you can determine where the pain is coming from, you are on your way to taking control and finding relief.

Your spine (or backbone) extends from the base of your skull to the top of your pelvis. The bones of your neck are called cervical vertebrae. Between each vertebra are discs which are fibrous, jelly-filled shock absorbers that allow the spine to stay flexible while supporting the weight of your head and neck. Another important component of your neck is the joints that link each vertebra to the one above and the one below.

Your spinal cord lies within a continuous bony tunnel known as the spinal canal. It is made up of rings of bone attached to the back of each vertebra. Branches from the cord exit the canal between adjacent vertebrae and form the nerves that travel throughout the body.

The nerves that allow your spine to feel pain are the same nerves that cause your limbs to feel pain too. When signals originating from a disc or neck joint are felt down your arm, we call it referred pain. This effect is common and typical of most mechanical neck problems. This type of pain is different from that of a pinched nerve, which can also travel into the arms but is far less common.

*your neck is a vulnerable part of your spine.  
chronic neck pain is a sign that something is wrong.*

## THE TRUTH ABOUT NECK PAIN: MYTHS AND FACTS

*Myth: Slipped discs*

**Fact: Discs cannot slip. They are securely attached between the bones of the spine. Discs allow movement while protecting the spine against sudden impact.**

*Myth: Degenerative disc disease*

**Fact: By your late teens, your discs have begun to dry out. As the centre of the disc loses moisture, the outer shell may crack and give way, but will toughen up again as you grow older.**

*Myth: Pinched nerves are a common cause of neck pain*

**Fact: If it is a pinched nerve, the pain is most disabling in the arm, not the neck, head or upper back.**

### INTEGRATED SERVICES. IMPROVED OUTCOMES.

Everything we do as a company is with the aim of achieving the best possible results for our clients and customers. We employ the very best people, practices and processes, with a focus on improving the daily lives of Canadians.

In addition to our national network of 130 community-based Outpatient Clinics, we offer a wide range of specialized services including Hospital, Eldercare, Home Health, Independent Assessment, Occupational Therapy, Workplace, Medical and a specialized Autism facility.

Our clients are our first priority, and it shows in everything we do.

*talk to us about how we can help*

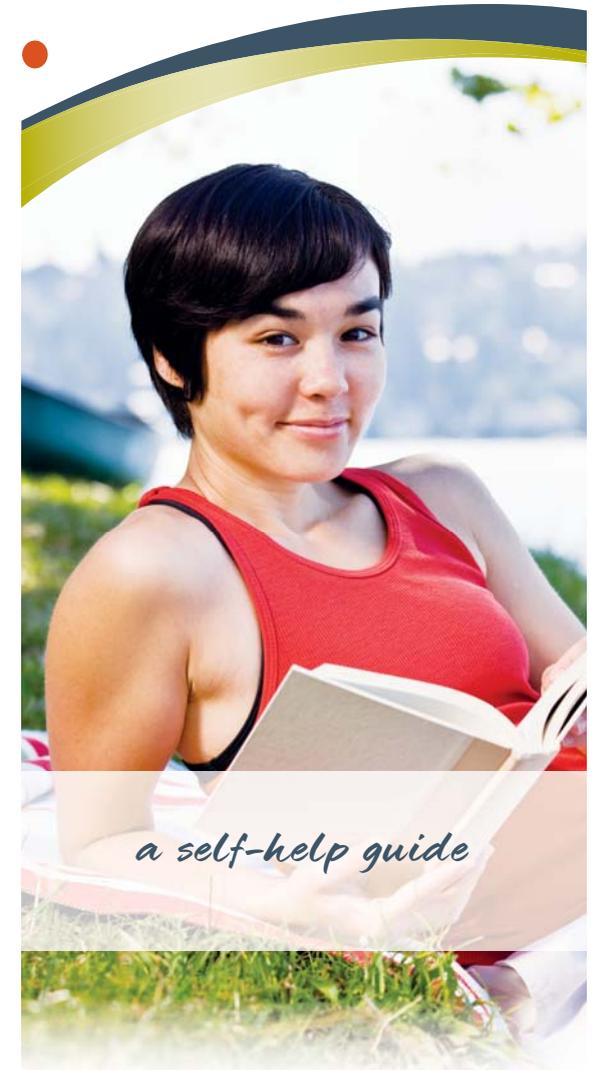
CBI Health Group is a leading provider of co-ordinated healthcare services and practice management expertise in Canada. We work with individuals and health managers all across the country to ensure that clients receive solutions tailored to their needs. With our cohesive network of providers and services, the result is better health outcomes.

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## NECK PAIN RELIEF



*a self-help guide*

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# take control of your pain management!

## WHY DO I HURT? IDENTIFY YOUR TYPE OF NECK PAIN

The first steps to relieving neck pain, is to first identify the source and what kind of pain it is. If you are among the vast majority of neck pain sufferers, you are most likely experiencing a mechanical problem. This means that the source of your symptoms is likely coming from one of the neck's physical components: the bones, the discs or the joints. The good news is that mechanical neck pain almost always falls into one of three common patterns of pain. Once you recognize your typical pattern, you can take steps on your own to quickly reduce the pain.

	PATTERN 1	PATTERN 2	PATTERN 3
<b>STEP 1: WHERE IS YOUR PAIN LOCATED?</b>	<p><b>Commonly called "Disc Pain".</b> Pain is worst in the neck, over the shoulders, or between the shoulder blades and may involve a headache.</p> 	<p><b>Commonly called "Facet Joint Pain".</b> Pain is worst in the neck, over the shoulders or between the shoulder blades and may involve a headache.</p> 	<p><b>Commonly called "Pinched Nerve".</b> Pain is felt mainly in the arm, although neck pain may be present.</p> 
<b>STEP 2: HOW OFTEN ARE YOU IN PAIN?</b>	Pain is usually intermittent but may be constant with varying intensity throughout the day.	Pain is always intermittent.	Pain is usually constant.
<b>STEP 3: WHAT MAKES YOUR PAIN WORSE?</b>	Pain is made worse by sitting and looking down, such as when reading or doing work on the computer.	Pain is made worse by looking upwards and turning the neck.	Pain is often worse when sitting and looking down, but can be made worse by backward movement in the acute state.
<b>STEP 4: WHAT MAKES YOUR PAIN BETTER?</b>	Pain is eased by doing a 'chin tuck' and then looking up.	Pain is eased by bending the neck forward and dropping the chin onto the chest.	Arm pain is eased by careful positioning of the neck.

## WHAT A RELIEF! SIMPLE WAYS TO REDUCE YOUR PAIN

Now that your particular type of pain has been identified, the following are some simple ways you can take control of your symptoms and get back to normal, pain-free living.

	PATTERN 1	PATTERN 2	PATTERN 3
<b>FOR FAST RELIEF</b>	Improve your neck posture in sitting position. Sit in a straight-backed chair and use a 5" lumbar roll to support the curve in the lower back.	Relieving Pattern 2 neck pain is usually quite easy and is achieved by bending the neck forward until your chin touches your chest.	Use pillows and a neck roll, either sitting or lying, to position your neck until the symptoms in your arm are relieved.
<b>DAILY TIPS</b>	Keep your earlobes directly over the slope of your shoulders.	If you are involved in prolonged work looking overhead, take regular stretch breaks, by touching your chin onto your chest 2 to 3 times each hour.	Maintain proper neck posture at all times.
<b>IMPORTANT DAILY EXERCISES</b>	<p><b>The Chin Tuck</b> Learn how to do Chin Tucks.</p> 	<p><b>Chin-to-chest</b> Learn how to do Flexion Stretches with over-pressure.</p> 	<p><b>Proper posture in lying position</b> In a fully supported position, try gentle retractions and sustain retraction for several seconds. Repeat as long as it does not increase your arm pain.</p> 